

Seasonal and 2009 H1N1 Flu : A Guide for Pregnant Women and Parents (formerly Swine Flu)



Pregnant women and infants can get very sick or even die from the flu. Infants under 6 months old can not get a flu vaccination, so it is important people who are around young infants are fully vaccinated.

Symptoms of the flu include:

- fever,
- cough,
- sore throat,
- runny or stuffy nose,
- body aches,
- headache,
- chills and
- fatigue.

If you have these symptoms while pregnant, or if your baby has these symptoms, call your doctor or your child's doctor right away. You should also tell your doctor if anyone living in your home becomes sick with the flu.

Get Vaccinated

Choosing to get vaccinated is the best way to protect you and your baby from the flu. If you are pregnant or have a young infant, it's important everyone in your home receives the seasonal flu vaccine AND the new 2009 H1N1 vaccine. The seasonal flu vaccine will not protect you from the 2009 H1N1 flu virus.

It is safe for pregnant women to get a flu vaccine at any time during their pregnancy, even in the first or second trimester.

If your pregnancy is complicated by chronic illnesses such as asthma, gestational diabetes or hypertension, you're at greater risk of getting really sick from the flu. Get vaccinated to protect yourself and your baby.

Tips to Prevent Flu

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissue in the trash after you use it or if you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaner are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Stay home if you get sick. You should stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, except to get medical care or for other necessities. Your fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

Treatment

Antiviral drugs can treat or prevent both seasonal flu and the 2009 H1N1 flu. If you think you have the flu or have been around someone with the flu, talk to your doctor about medicines for the flu.

For more flu information, visit www.flu.gov, www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/pregnant.htm or www.flu.nc.gov or call N.C. CARE-LINE, 1-800-662-7030 (TTY 1-877-452-2514).



* Nasal spray flu vaccine is not recommended for pregnant women.